THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) A number of labour laws have been enacted to address the various aspects of labour problems. These encompass a vast span of subjects which include freedom of association and trade unions rights, conditions of work, minimum wages, social security, labour relations, migrant workers, employment of children etc. Review of labour laws is a continuous process and enacting of new laws and amendments to existing laws are made taking into account emerging factors.

The impact of the new industrial Policy has been studied by the Government in regard to technological upgradation and modernisation of units as a consequences of liberalisation. Government established the National Renewal Fund in 1992 to provide a social safety net for the workers affected by industrial restructuring, technology upgradation and modernisation of industry. It inter alia envisages assistance, counselling, retraining and redeployment of workers who may become redundant.

Improvement in the ESI Hospital services

1020. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the increase in the number of workers as a result of enhancement in the income ceiling of workers from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 6500/- per month;

(b) what is the average number of workers handled by each ESI dispensary;

(c) whether Government are aware that medical services provided by ESI have deteriorated and if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of the remedial steps taken to improve medical services for the workers in ESI hospitals/dispensaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) 10.39 lakh (As on 30.6.1997).

(b) Under the ESI Act, the responsibility for administration of medical care vests in the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations except in Delhi and Noida where it is being administered by the ESIC direct. As per the norm of the ESIC, a dispensary comprising two Doctors is required to handle approximately has thousand Insured Persons Unit. Depending upon the workload and physical requirement, the average number of workers handled in such Dispensary varied from 581 to 12650 from State to State for the period ending 31st March, 1996.

(c) and (d) There have been sporadic complaints about shortage of doctors, medicines, equipments etc. in the ESI hospitals/dispensaries. Such complaints, as and when received, are forwarded to the State Governments for taking remedial action. In order to improve functioning of the ESI dispensaries, the Corporation has planned to provide all basic essential equipments to all dispensaries as a one time measure. The Corporation has also enhanced the ceiling on expenditure on medical care from Rs. 410/- to Rs. 500/- per Insured Person per annum w.e.f. 1.4.97.

Funds from International Agencies to Reduce Unemployment

1021. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sought any funds from international agencies to reduce unemployment in the country;

(b) if so, the institutions which have been approached;

(c) the results of such efforts;

(d) whether ILO has promised any funds to meet unemployment in the beedi sector; and